THINK INDIA JOURNAL

ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

Self-Realisation, Gender Inequality In The Novels Of Githa Hariharan

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Abstract

Indian English fiction has gained rapidly, numerous accolades at home and abroad. Indian women Novelists have been portraying women as a silent sufferer. In the writings of the women authors, we hear what was never said or was said from man's perspective. The quest for identity is an important search that each human- being feels at a certain time. GithaHariharan examines the disturbed psyche of the modern India woman. Indian woman now question the prominent old patriarchal domination and shows signs of survival to the same through literature. In the study of the novels of GithaHariharan one cannot ignore the women subject because women have a significant place in her novels. Feminine consciousness is the soul of her writings and feminist elements truly represent her progressive ideas in all her major works. Even today, we hear of numerous instances of cruelty against women. This paper attempts to identify the causes for self-realization and Gender inequality.

Key words: *- Gender inequality, Self- realization, Silent suffering, Identity, Tradition.*

Introduction

We live in a society and interact with and express ourselves to our fellow men and women through language which gives away to creating literature. It means that society is the subject of the literature. Literature is the mirror of the society. It expresses social sympathies and influences our society too. Novels have also changed the direction of our thoughts.

GithaHariharan first novel the *thousands faces of night (1992)* highlights the survival of women belonging to three different generations namely, Devi, Sita and Mayamma. The central character is Devi who faces problems because of her modern education and

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ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

upbringing. Devi the protagonist here a plain looking girl educated in the United States returns to India at the behest of her mother gets married to delight and serious minded business executive Mahesh. She is forced to marry Mahesh but the marriage deprives her of identity and urges. Communication gap between Mahesh and Devi chocks her voice and sensibility. Later Devi decides to abscond with Gopal only to take revenge from Mahesh. In the study of the novels of GithaHariharan one cannot ignore the women because women has significant role in her novels. On the other hand, GithaHariharan has conducted dialogues with the family and social life and on the other; she has reflected the exploited Indian women who is searching for justice and equality. She has exploded patriarchy, gender in equality, self- realization and neglected towards woman. GithaHariharan's women are aware of the shortcomings of their traditional culture and society they rebel against male-dominance but find themselves in a situation where they only have the option to adjust. The sea-saw of individual desire and social expectation never reaches a balance but may indicate the initiation of future change. GithaHariharan investigates the inner conscience of these women who wants to achieve self-realization. Through her protagonist GithaHariharan candidly present the unnoticed aspect of women through which was invisible to this outside world.

The Ghosts of Vasu Master where with a Hariharan depicts Vasu's feminine who are Mangla, Jameela and Eliamma. Here the protagonist is a retired teacher, a widower, who lives on his memories of the past. He tells various stories to a young boy and recreates the past, he recalls the tales of his grandmother, Mangala, Jemeela and Eliamma. The real ghost from Mangala's story.

Vasu Master Grandmother was a rebellious woman. She was illiterate but didn't blindly believe her husband. Once she told Vasu, "what is husband, Vasu? Just a hungry stomach and a few other things, never mind what. But all really greedy, swallowing like big red swollen mouth, then chewing and belching. She had independent thinking of her own and even supported nationalist cause against her husband. Thus, close observation of tradition and modernity we have seen the fable of timeless in which tradition and modernity are old and new, united in fluency which speaks the present in a non-modern way. And we have watching Vasu balancing himself in relation to a series of figures with to oppressive a form of rationality, whether modern and tradition close observation of tradition and protect against it, is an important feature of Hariharn's novel *The Ghost of Vasu Master*. The literature is a

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ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

social entity has been evolved by writers by making clear distinction between age old tradition and revolt against them.

In Fugitive Histories, GithaHariharan has taken a women-centric plot. She portrays the reality of women hood in India and women's identity crisis. She has also depicted the plight of women in contemporary society by comparing it with traditional situations. Hariharan raised her voice against male dominance in the society towards women and explores the domestic trauma that takes place in the everyday life of common women. She has described minutely the social upheaval and cultural turmoil by exposing women's suppression and their individual struggle which causes personal trauma. Hariharan has portrayed the post-Godhara riots that had occurred 2002, while describing three leading female characters Mala, Sara and Yasmin and through them she speaks for women's rights. Her characters are competent enough to break the chain of social conventions and stereotype. She denounces the patriarchal power structure of Indian society which humiliates women mentally and abuses them physically.

GithaHariharan takes a stride upwards and discusses about the situations like riots which occurred in the state of Gujarat through her novel *The Fugitive Histories*. This is a directive narrative and research of the people who were victims to the riots and how their lives affected the immediate riots which occurred unexpectedly. GithaHariharan has expressed her view about the communal violence which shattered the nation by killing lots of innocents people destroyed their lives. GithaHariharan wants to send a message of love and peace to the human community and wages a war against communal feeling and violence. There are few people only who internally believe that all the God are same, but only a few out of them exercise it in real.

GithaHariharan has pictured the domestic trauma by providing a contrast to the experience of the trauma of war, bloodshed and physical violence Yasmin was a victim of the communal disturbance in which she lost her only brother Akbar. The novelist describes Yasmin's traumatic experience and shows how she survives and responds to her surroundings. Yasmin is highly hunted by the bloody sights printed in her head that is nagging her all time. The words like careful, alert, guarding against, or anything can happen. GithaHariharan has minutely described a girl's inner trauma how she suffers and fight against the male dominance and she gives innumerable illustrations of callousness towards women. Hariharan presents the pain and problems which not only a women but also a girl has to face.

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As Hariharan portrays Yasmin's inner conflict while walking alone on road .Yasmin look straight her dupatta wraps her head, her neck and her chest. She prays "Allah, I am not greedy; you know I never ask you for big things, only small" because being safe is the most important thing to all.

In the novel When Dreams Travel, GithaHariharan uses the old story of *The Arabian Nights* as the theme and the interest. Shahrzad is the female story-teller an Arabian king a different story every night for a thousand and one nights as a means of defying her death. When shahrzad, the Arabian King wants to know from where she has got the inspiration for all her amazing tales. Shahrzad's remark is rather revealing I don't have a sword, so it seems I cannot rule, i cannot travel, I don't care to weep. But I can dream.

This novel is formed on the basis of the structure of Arabian Nights and has crafted well. The main character of the novel is shahrzad. On the basis of this novel one can set example of self-realization and gender inequality in this connection. Shahrzad's character is very important the link between masculinity and sexual violence is repeatedly asserted through this novel. Shahrzad life is dependent on her performance and her craft.

In fact, GithaHariharan is a post-colonial women dealing with the problem of individual identity and national identity at the same time. The detailed study of her novels reveals the changing society, emotional and ideological set up in our country. Her fiction acquaints with an understanding of women's issues and predicaments. GithaHariharan with her intellectual standards and sharp observation of life and has imparted a psychological depth to her female characters. She has projected deep views of female psyche. Inner aspirations and their peculiar responses to patriarchal society.

The clearness that dawns on GithaHariharan through her close observation of the life of her women is that they are reduced to being soul-less, unloved, alienated creatures carrying no place either in family, society, home or heart of their callous and unimaginative husbands, in the face of rejection or to say dejection, faltering on pebbles one after another, they are left with no alternative expect to embark on journey of freedom from their worldly cages they have been suffered into. Their souls cry and in a fit of rage they say no to such demeaning and wretched existence as if that is the only act of value they can commit out of sheer force of will and choice. They show the consciousness of her women in all her five novels. They represent the modern women who are conscious of themselves.

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ISSN:0971-1260
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GithaHariharan has been able to invent meaningful new world that is not meant for perpetrating only agony, despair, disgust, loneliness, alienation, meaningless in existence but a world that is imbued with the everlasting spring, hope and harmony, upon a faith that does not ravage but enriches and invigorates, encourages the sustain. The vision of a changing, moving reality through the passage of time is a new faith that reflects through the women characters of her novel.

At last, the women characters of GithaHariharan are conscious of individuality and struggle for liberated feminist identity, along patterns of resistance, survival, imaginative choices and solidarity, leading to unexpected life stories.

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ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

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